WINTER;

OR, THE

COMFORTS

OF A

FIRE-SIDE.

EMBELLISHED WITH FINE WOOD ENGRAVINGS.

LONDON;

PRINTED FOR ROYLE, CORCORAN, AND CROMPTON,

108, UPPER THAMES STREET,

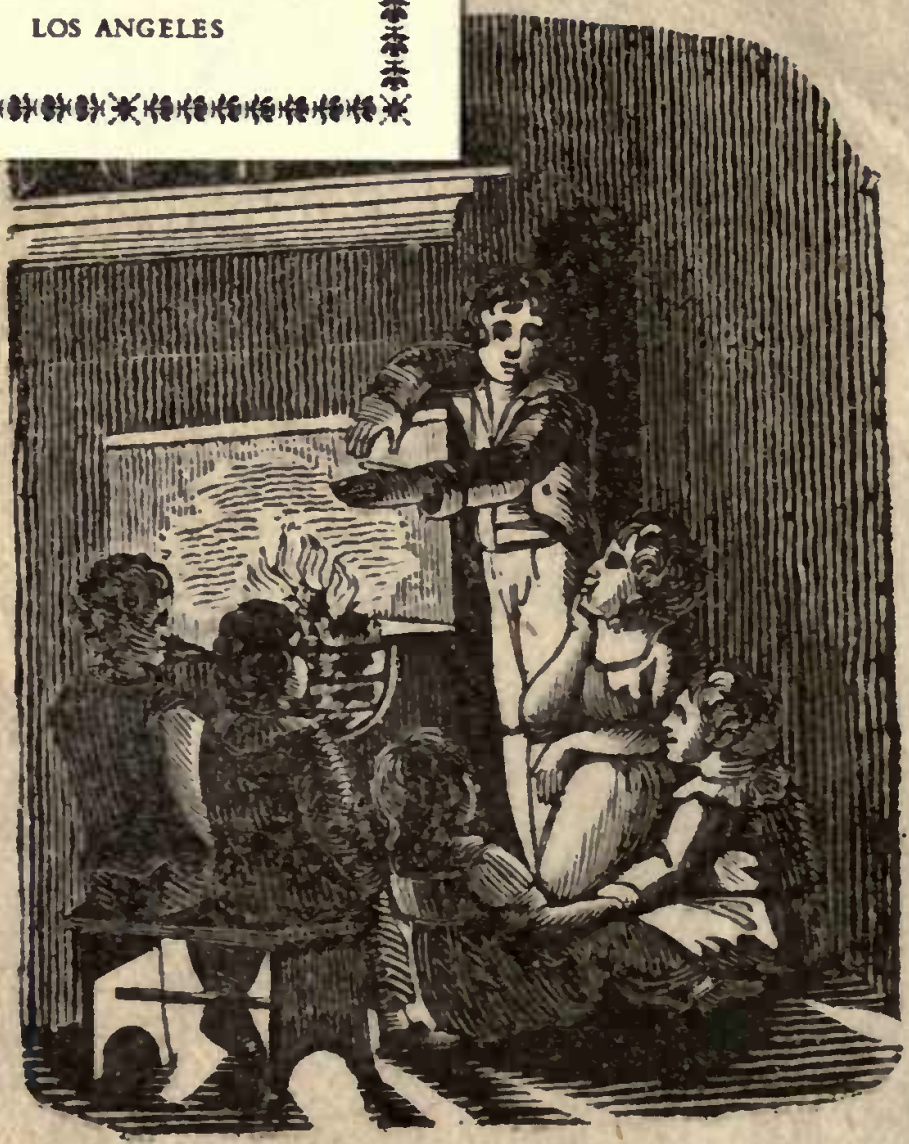
BY J. ARLISS AND CO. 32, GUTTER LANE.

1806

PRICE SIXPENCE.

CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION

LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES



WINTER;

OR, THE

COMFORTS

OF A

FIRE-SIDE.

EMBELLISHED WITH FINE WOOD ENGRAVINGS.

LONDON;

PRINTED FOR BOYLE, CORCORAN, AND CROMPTON,
198, UPPER THAMES STREET,

BY J. ARLISS AND CO. 32, GUTTER LANE.
1806.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

WINTER.

THE severity of this season is felt in all quarters of the world in a greater or less degree ; the trees are divested of all their leaves, and pretty little birds sit shivering on their naked branches. No music cheers the traveller as he passes through the grove ; nor verdure clothe the plain. The winds blow cold, and make little boys and girls creep to the fire side, where they can play and amuse

themselves without being exposed to the fogs that arise, for now the faint sun is scarcely seen or felt.

Mr. Clarke and his family lived in a good house at the extremity of York ; it consisted of himself, his wife, two little boys, and two girls, the objects of their care and parental affection.

As they sat one evening round the cheerful fire, talking and laughing the long dark night away ; Mr. Clarke addressed his children, " you hear, my dears, how the north wind whistles and the tempest roars ; yet we are safely sheltered by a com-

fortable fire-side, while some weary travellers at this moment are bending their way over the dreary heath, exposed to the utmost severity of the storm."

"Oh, father," said his eldest boy, William, who was just come into the house, "I should not like to be out all night, the snow descends and has already covered over the ground; how do people keep themselves warm that are so much exposed to the weather?"

"Why, my dear, Providence has kindly furnished us with every thing that is necessary for each season of

the year, and by the industry of individuals made fit for use, as people's occupation may require. We are in a moderate climate, and have not the extremities of heat and cold to endure, that the inhabitants of some countries have; there are parts of the earth that are always covered with snow. such as the tops of high mountains, and other quarters of the world, they never see any snow, but have always a burning sun upon them.

"Thus the Indians, such as the men with black faces and hands, that you see in the street, when they first came into Europe, and saw the snow,

they called it white rain, for they had never seen any before as none ever fell in the country where they come from.

In countries where it is particularly cold, there are many wild beasts, and Providence has taught the people how to kill them, without being much exposed to danger themselves ; when they take off the skins and dress them in a manner which renders them warm and comfortable clothing. The coats we wear are made from the wool that grows upon the backs of sheep ; the natives of Lapland, where it is very cold, and during most part of the year nothing

to see but snow and ice, they kill foxes and wolves, and are clad all over with their warm skins.

"When winter comes we have need of an additional coat, which keeps us sufficiently warm; the careful farmer who goes into the fields to feed his flocks and herds with hay, becomes accustomed to the weather, and is not so much affected by it; while his thresher in the barn, from morn to night, pursues the flail's laborious task, and keeps himself warm by the exercise, which is extremely healthful and makes him more strong and vigorous, for his hard work.

"In summer you see the ladies of this country dressed in muslins and silks, that are principally brought in large ships from the warm country of India, and in winter they add the bear skin tippet round their necks, and muffs to put their hands in; these are brought from Russia, where it is so cold in winter, that large rivers are congealed into a solid piece of ice by the frost.

"The people out of curiosity sometimes build houses up of large square blocks of ice, and once they made a piece into the shape of a cannon, such as our soldiers and sailors fight the French with, and fired

gunpowder out of it and it did not break."

"They have very few fire grates like this of ours, for they would not make their houses warm enough, but ovens from which there are flews in the walls that go round the rooms, and there is a fire in the oven, that sends the heat, by means of these flews into all parts of the house; but here a good fire makes it comfortable in the coldest weather."

Mrs. Clarke thought it time for the young people to go to bed, and their father promised to tell them more of the manners and customs of the

inhabitants of those cold countries another time, so they went to bed very well pleased.

In the morning they got up before their father and mother, the ground was covered with snow, at which they seemed highly delighted, nor could they help running about the yard amongst it ; when starved they ran into the house to warm themselves by the fire and then out again.

William and his brother John made snow balls and threw them at each other, their sisters kept near the door and threw at them both ; at last William pushed his brother down in

the midst of it and ran away ; John got up again but would not play any more, as he said it was not right to knock him down.

At this moment Mrs. Clarke saw them from her chamber window, and beckoned them into the house, whither they instantly ran. She scolded them a little for treading the snow into the house and dirtying the floor, requesting them to play in the house at some nice game.

While they were at breakfast, there was a pretty little Robin Red Breast came into the house, when the servant opened the door, and sat in

one of the windows a good long time, it seemed starved and hungry, so Mr. Clarke gave it some bread crumbs steeped in milk, which it picked up without appearing to be afraid; when it had eaten them it became more lively and flew about the room, but particularly against the window, as if it wished to go out, so Mrs. Clarke opened the window and away it flew.

It came again next morning and sat singing upon the window, till they let it in and fed it again; regularly all winter it came at breakfast time, and at last became so tame as to sit upon the table and pick up

crumbs which they dropt, and would perch upon their shoulders.

After breakfast their father lent them a dissected map of England, Scotland, and Ireland, that was given to him when a little boy, and told them to sit by the fire and put it together, by this they might learn the geography of their native country. It was printed on paper and pasted upon wood,the different counties were then all cut out very nicely so that they had them all to place in their proper situation. Seated round the table, upon which they had put them out of the case, they began their work.

At first they did not arrange them according as they laid, but took up the pieces and tried to fit them to each other by the niches and projecting parts, this occupied them a long time, though it was very pleasant amusement for them; with much perseverance and many experiments, as to the pieces which would fit, in each other, they got it right.

"Now my dears" said Mrs. Clarke, who sat sewing beside them, "you must notice what counties are next to each other and where abouts the country they lay, keep it in your mind and you will put them together much sooner next time. Where is

York, look if you can find it ?" "Here it is, mother," exclaimed Charlotte, her eldest daughter, "just under my finger." "Let me see," rejoined her mother, "yes, that is right, my dear ; now look for London, and try who can find it first."

Poring over the map from one end to the other, Mary placing her finger against it by chance, cryed out "here it is, this is it mother, is it not ?" "Yes," said her mother, "that is right ; London is the metropolis of England, the King and Queen have palaces there, where they sometimes live, not always ;

there are as many fine sights there as in any place in the world, though it costs a great deal of money to see them; most of the noblemen of the country have large elegant houses there, which they go to reside in at winter, when they leave their country seats.

Many of the fine clothes we wear come from London, as well as the nice things we eat and drink." "Oh dear mother," said Mary, "I should like to go there if I had plenty of money, I could buy such a quantity of nice things to play with, do you think I shall ever go there?" "Why probably you may," replied Mrs.

Clarke, "if you live and be well, but it is not likely that you will before you are a woman, and then you will not want playthings." "If I was to go now, mother," said William, "I should like to buy a good horse, with a new saddle, bridle, and whip, then I could ride all over the kingdom, and see whatever is curious and remarkable; I have heard my father talk about many of these towns whose names I see here, and should like to go to them myself."

"What place is there," enquired Mrs Clarke, "that you want to go to?" "Why," mother, "I should like to see Edinburgh, is not that a

large town ?" " Yes it is, William, and is the capitol of Scotland, it once was the residence of a king and queen, but is now united to England, under the same regal authority. Dinner is ready, therefore you must take them up and put them into the case again."

They were fond of this amusement, Mr. Clarke was glad to perceive it, being very instructive ; dinner being over, the geographical subject was again introduced, and the map brought upon the table, Mr. Clarke shewed them how to place it, by the situation of every county, and in a little time they became able to place

it together themselves with great facility.

Not willing to tire them of it the first day, Mr. Clarke told them he would take care of it, and they might play about for the afternoon, and in the evening he should tell them some pleasing story that he would recollect.

William got his pop gun and some pieces of tobacco pipe, with which he placed himself again the window, and when a bird came that way, he opened the window and fired at it. John was there beside him to watch, but as he did not kill any, nor would let him fire, it tired him of

watching, so he got out his rocking horse, that had a fine saddle and bridle, and rode upon it before the fire all the afternoon; he was near falling off several times, upon which John declared he was too well fed that made him so high spirited and kick while he was upon him; nevertheless he imitated feeding him with corn, by holding some bread to his mouth; he was rubbing him down like a hostler, to clean him after his journey, and amused himself with his favourite horse all the afternoon.

His sisters were very busy in dressing two new dolls that had been given them, they washed their gowns

and caps and put them on, trimming them with fine ribbons until they were quite smart.

Mr. Clarke returned to tea, and as he was not going out again they begged he would tell them some nice stories which he had promised to do the night before; he told them not to call them stories because it was all truth, and was done every day in the countries he mentioned.

"When you went to bed last night," said Mr. Clarke, "I was speaking of the severity of winter in Russia, where much snow falls, generally attended with frost; the peo-

ple of rank and quality do not ride in carriages like those you see here; those they use, have no wheels, but slide on the top of the snow, and are pulled by deer yoked to them instead of horses, which the snow is hard enough to bear without letting them sink in; thus they drive amazingly quick, though they are often exposed to great danger of being turned over, down high precipices that would dash them pieces.

In Lapland the beasts of the forest are rendered very ravenous and fierce by hunger and cold; the wolves rush down from the hills upon the unwary traveller in droves, and fasten

upon his horse, press him to the earth, when he and his rider become a prey to their appetites with very short resistance.

" Here we are not exposed to such a dreadful death, though every moment liable to finish our existence on earth. In Holland the frost is very severe, and continues long, but as in other countries attended with many beneficial advantages to the natives.

" Almost every body there can skate, the country abounds with rivers and canals; when they are frozen over, the people skate from one town

to another about business, and the farmer carries his butter and eggs to market in a basket under his arm, going a great distance in a short time upon his skates; even their wives and very little children may be seen skating to market and to school very expeditiously."

"I should like to have a pair of skates and learn to use them, father," said William, "will you buy me a pair?" "Why, my dear," replied Mr. Clarke, "it is certainly very healthful exercise, but there is much danger in it, and as there is no necessity for you to learn, I would rather give you something that will

both amuse and teach you what may be useful to you when a man, as you will have to be an industrious tradesman to procure the comforts of life, and maintain you respectably in the world as a valuable member of society.

"If myself or your mother should live to an old age and need your assistance, you must imitate the Stork, of whose filial duty I will give you a short sketch:

"They generally live to an advanced age, their limbs grow feeble, their feathers fall off, and they are incapable of providing for their food

or safety. Being birds of passage, they are under another inconvenience for they are not able to remove themselves from one country to another, at the usual season. In all these circumstances, it is reported their young ones assist them, covering them with their wings, and nourishing them with the warmth of their bodies.

" They bring them provision in their beaks, and carry them from place to place on their back, or support them with their wings. In this manner they return as much as lies in their power, the care which was bestowed on them when young in the nest. A striking example of filial piety, from

which we need not be ashamed to to take example."

Again bed time arrived before it was wished for by the young people, so much did the conversation of their father interest their minds; anxious to become as learned as himself. "How did you get to know all these things that happen such a distance from us father," enquired John. "By reading the books of learned men, who have travelled over most part of the habitable world, for the information of their fellow creatures, and whatever they see and learn, that will give wisdom to mankind, they write down, and on their return

have them printed that any body may buy; thus you see we can learn much by sitting against our own fire side and reading books," replied Mr. Clarke.

"I wonder, father" returned John "that they ever get back again; as they cross such large seas and travel in distant countries, that are inhabited by such uncivilized people, and where beasts of prey so much abound; it is very good of them to hazard their own lives, and undergo so many fatigues and hardships for the instruction and pleasure of those who can read in a few hours, comfortably by a winter's fire side, with-

out trouble or molestation, what has cost them such pains and difficulties to collect."

"As you observed, my dear," answered Mr. Marshall, "it is wonderful that so many return as do, but some who go out on discoveries are lost, and never heard of more; yet this consideration does not prevent others from undertaking similar projects.

"Now you must go to bed like good boys and girls, and to-morrow, we may, probably, give you further information, either on this subject, or some other equally interesting."

In the morning there was still much snow upon the ground, though it was not very cold. Mr. Clarke had a large room at the end of his house, in which the children were accustomed to play : they had gone into it, and contrived to fix a rope round the large beams of wood at the top of the roof, so as to form an excellent swing ; in this they placed a piece of board to sit upon, but not so secure as to prevent them from falling, for as Charles and Mary were seated in full swing, the rope slipped and the board turned, and threw them both down together upon the floor. Poor Mary was much frightened and cried sadly.

This noise brought Mr. Clarke, who had just returned home with two new skipping ropes for his daughters. Mary soon dried up her tears when she began her new amusement, and after some little practice she began to skip very pretty, and often amused her parents by her nimble performances with the rope.

Next day Mr. Clarke thought it best to take down the swing, to prevent them falling any more, and gave each of them a battle-door and shuttlecock instead ; this was a nice employment and exercise for them. Mary and Charles used to play together, Charles standing at

one end of the room and Mary at the other, so strike the shuttlecock backward and forward.

They passed several days in this manner, very happy, with Mr. Clarke's evening amusement of relating to them the curiosities, and telling them the number of travellers that had visited foreign countries.

Among the foremost in reputation of our own countrymen, is the celebrated Captain Cooke, who sailed round the world twice on discoveries, and on his attempt to complete a third, he was unfortunately stabbed by the inhabitants of the island of

Otaheite, while trafficking for articles he had taken with him for the express purpose of introducing himself amongst them without any force being used, and while they were transacting business apparently in the most friendly manner, the natives came in great numbers and suddenly fell upon the sailors with great boldness, when this country suffered an irretrievable loss in the death of her adventurous Captain Cooke, by the hands of uncivilized people.

" The travels of Mungo Parke into the interior of Africa, likewise claim our attention; in endeavour-

ing to explore those dreadful and in general inhospitable regions, where lions and tigers run; almost every other beast of prey abound in great numbers, and beneath a scorching sun, he encountered great danger and fatigue; all these he encountered for the benefit and use of mankind, who might thus become acquainted with the manners and customs of the inhabitants of Africa.

In this manner did Mr. Clarke amuse and instruct his children during the whole winter, and instilling into their youthful minds the principles of virtue and morality, and a dependance upon that providence

who thus provides for the inclemencies of winter by the enjoyment of a warm fire-side where the various parts of a family can meet and enjoy the company of each other; and where it not for this blessing, they must retire comfortless to bed.

FINIS.

Arliss, & Co. 82, Gutter-lane.